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The old-time inhabitants of "douce France" seem to have been keenly alive to the beauties of the spring-time, of the flowing rivers and the green meadows. Even in the satirical *Roman de Renart* we find these charming lines:

Où mois de mai qu'este commence
Que cil arbre cueillent semence
Que cler chantent parmi le gaut.
L'oriot et le papegaut.¹

In the passage quoted from *Wistasse le Moine*, however, there is something more than the mere mention of a nightingale's song. There is not a little psychological interest. The author has wrought the Count of Boulogne into such a susceptible mood that he interprets the simple notes of the nightingale as rendered by this joking Wistasse, in accordance with his own revengeful train of thought. More fanciful than what we are accustomed to find in mediæval poetry, this device here does much to increase the humor of the situation. We have all been in a frame of mind when the sounds about us have a special significance. It would be interesting to hear of parallel passages in mediæval literature where resort is had to a dialogue between a man and an animal after the fashion of this conversation between the Count of Boulogne and Wistasse the monk, impersonating the nightingale.

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L'ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

SIRS:—The two sessions of the *Alliance Française* at Paris during the months of July and August were marked by larger attendance and more advanced courses than any previous session. The United States was fairly well represented, and teachers of French from all parts of Europe took advantage of the privileges offered. During the July session the Germanic group outnumbered either the Anglo-American, the Slav, or the International, but the August session found the Anglo-American the strongest.

The *Alliance* had stately quarters for its lectures at the *École Coloniale* in the *Avenue de l'Observatoire*, where, in the center of student Paris, the members had every opportunity and

encouragement for their work.

As might have been expected, the courses were far from being of equal value, but a certain freedom of election was allowed even to the candidates for a diploma, and this liberty enabled all participants to concentrate their efforts on the subjects they considered most suited to their individual needs.

Among the lecturers were men of ability and scholarly reputation. The director, M. Ferdinand Brunot, proved himself an efficient administrator, and gave a set of lectures on Historical French Grammar. His ability as a teacher is in no way inferior to his power as a writer.

A brilliant course of lectures was given by M. René Doumic, the eminent critic. He treated the Literature of the Nineteenth Century in a way that delighted his audience, while his clear insight and careful analysis put system into the chaotic abundance of the materials. Always clear and logical, always enthusiastic, even when most severe in his criticism, M. Doumic by his style and manner made himself a universal favorite.

The course in Phonetics was one of the most important. The Abbé Rousselot and M. Zund-Burguet, eminent authorities on this subject, gave instruction of great value to those attending the course. The Abbé Rousselot gave the general lectures, after which the practical and experimental work was directed by M. Zund-Burguet, a separate class being formed for each group of nationalities.

There were offered each month ten different courses, embracing the subjects best suited to the needs of teachers of French in foreign lands. The summer sessions of the *Alliance* have now attained the rank of a university summer school, and the policy of meeting the wants of the greatest number will doubtless draw each year more and more teachers of French to hear its lecturers. At the annual banquet, the Director announced the intention of offering next year a larger variety of courses, and of permitting more freedom of election. This will tend to give to the *Alliance* still more of the character of a university summer school, and will meet more fully the desire of American teachers of French.

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¹ Verses 1-4 of Branche xvii in Henri Martin's edition.